The Efficacy of Interpersonal Skills in Contemporary Policing: Are Police Adequately Prepared to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century?

Approved by Dr. Susan Hilal, August 8, 2012

The Efficacy of Interpersonal Skills in Contemporary Policing: Are Police Adequately Prepared to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century?

A Seminar Paper

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

University of Wisconsin-Platteville

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirement for the Degree

Master of Science

In

Criminal Justice

By:

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Summer 2012

Acknowledgement

First, and foremost, I wish to thank my family for their tireless, unending support and tolerance over the last many years as I pursued my educational goals. To my wife, Lysa, who has sacrificed much and endured significant time alone, yet continued to provide unyielding support and much, much more throughout this endeavor. I also wish to express appreciation to my two sons, Colby and Hayden, for their patience and understanding as this 'old man' embarked on new journeys of higher education in the new millennium filled with unknowns and challenges. As for my daughter, Mikensi, I thank her immensely for understanding that dad had school work to do and was sometimes short on patience as deadlines neared. I am eternally grateful for the advisors and professors at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville who unselfishly imparted their knowledge, sound guidance and wisdom and, specifically, wish to thank Dr. Cheryl Fuller for always being there and continually providing direction to an aged student. Also, my everlasting gratitude is extended to Dr. Susan Hilal for appropriately establishing the ground rules and my expectations and standards in this quest for greater knowledge and ensuring me that I would persevere in spite of my self-doubts. I also wish express a great deal of gratitude to my immediate supervisor, Eduardo Fernandez, for his continued support, understanding, and assistance in making this opportunity a reality. Finally, I must thank my "uncle" for his financial support in this long desired dream of higher education.

Abstract

Statement of Problem

It is argued that many of today's police are substantially ill-prepared in meeting the demands within contemporary policing philosophies (Linfoot, 2007, 2008). An area of much criticism rests with their ability to effectively and efficiently communicate within their areas of official responsibility with significant impact to overall performance at combating crime and countering terrorism. Within this realm, numerous areas with direct and indirect relationship to interpersonal and communication skills are explored and examined as possibly being contributory toward police communicative deficit.

Some researchers argue recruiting, selection, and hiring practices do not adequately identify those possessing adequate interpersonal skills (Decicco, 2000; Means & Lowry, 2011; Means, Lowry, & Conroy, 2011a, 2011b; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010), while other research demonstrates notably absent consideration for interpersonal and communication skills assessment (Henson, Reyns, Klahm IV, & Frank, 2010; Sanders, 2003, 2008; White, 2008; White & Escobar, 2008). Other scholars allege inadequate interpersonal and communication training of personnel is contributory (Meadows, 1987; Walters, 2003; Woods, 2000), while others argue higher education is the remedy to this inadequacy (Dominey & Hill, 2010; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Paynich, 2009; Schmalleger, 2009).

Research Methods

Secondary data as well as review of related empirical, theoretical, practical findings, and observations is analyzed to examine the efficacy of interpersonal skills among law enforcement personnel. Additionally, information stemming from research, data, and publications from

accredited journals, textbooks, and websites in other disciplines to include but not limited to psychology and interpersonal communications is presented. Additionally, observations and professional experiences is relied upon to assess application and limitations of the available research relevant to this paper. A brief examination of two interpersonal communication theories with relevance to police will be conducted. The subsequent findings are then utilized to determine the possible existing needs within policing agencies. Based on this analysis of collective information within this study, conclusions and recommendations regarding interpersonal and communication skills among police are presented.

Summary of Results

The results of this study clearly demonstrates the increased need for interpersonal and communication skills and abilities and training among frontline officers. Clearly, there are deficits in these areas virtually impacting every facet and level of policing and threatening the overall efficacy of law enforcement efforts.

To begin, agencies must clearly define their policing philosophies and then develop and promote recruitment, selection, and hiring strategies to complement agency missions, goals, and objectives. Emphasis should be placed on hiring the best qualified candidates possessing the necessary qualities, characteristics, and skills consistent with agency objectives. Ample consideration should be given in the areas of higher education and interpersonal communication skills.

Once hired these officers must be provided adequate and appropriate training in proper fashion so as to produce an immediate viable working entity for success in a contemporary

policing environment. At the pinnacle of this training, should be interpersonal communication skills which will be more readily and often utilized in service than any other.

In conclusion, contemporary policing requires more community- and problem-oriented abilities and must fulfill any number of civil servant roles from community advocacy to mediator to counselor to arresting official while maintain an air of compassion, understanding and empathy. To be effective and successful, frontline police must possess attributes consistent with independent functioning while exhibiting skills and traits that have historically been reserved for leadership. Today, police must master a vast array of technical, cognitive, and affective skills while particularly excelling in communication and interpersonal skills.

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Many theorists argue that today's frontline officers are grossly ill-prepared to handle the ever-increasing and changing demands of contemporary policing (Linfoot, 2007, 2008). One crucial area found contributory to this deficient is the inability of law enforcement personnel to effectively communicate among themselves and with their communities (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010). Additional research postulates these communicative failures are not limited to any one area of law enforcement, but transcend all levels to various degrees and must be considered integral to this profession (Dreeke, 2009; McDermott & Hulse, 2012; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Globalization and technological advancements have served to create criminal elements of more sophistication as never witnessed before. Without a doubt, law enforcement worldwide and at all levels has been effected and are now required to adapt to a criminal element not hampered by nation's borders or territorial boundaries, yet some organizations have failed to make the transition. In the past century, policing has been compelled to transform from more traditional and reactive roles to those characterized as more progressive and proactive (Haberfeld, 2002; Schmalleger, 2009). This adaptation has created major shifts in law enforcement paradigms to include changes in policing philosophies with increased demands and societal influences urging increased professionalization (Cordner & Shain, 2011). At the pinnacle of this professionalization process is enhanced interpersonal skills focusing on the ability to effective communicate (Webb, 2008).

In this context, the recruitment, selection, hiring, and training of qualified law enforcement individuals seems to succumb to traditional policing practices and its subculture (Bradford & Pynes, 1999; Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Ellison, 2006). Historically, the qualities, characteristics, and traits of police personnel have focused chiefly on characteristics of trustworthiness, honesty, and integrity. Only recently with the conceptualization of community policing and the related demonstrated need for additional skills, have these traditional attributes been expanded to include any reference to interpersonal skills. Many local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies list interpersonal and communication skills in various processes to include hiring, performance evaluations, and promotions; however, there is lack of uniformity, unclear standards, and blurred measurements of competencies and success (Cooper & Bradshaw, 1975; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Scrivner, 2006).

In sum, there is extensive research identifying the lack of sufficient interpersonal skills among law enforcement and its significance to ineffective policing in a modern society (Burgoon, Buller, & Guerrero, 1995; Cooper & Bradshaw, 1975; Dreeke & Sidener, 2010; Foley & Terrill, 2008; McDermott & Hulse, 2012; Paynich, 2009; Woods, 2000). Interpersonal skills and the ability to effectively communicate are crucial and vital at all levels of policing and, perhaps, more especially for frontline officers with regard to community policing. To be effective at preserving public safety, countering terrorism, and rising to the expectations of its citizenry, today's law enforcement must transition into more progressive policing philosophies adequately staffed with competent personnel possessing enhanced interpersonal communication skills.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this treatise will be to provide recommendations and guidance to identification, preparation, and continued training of individuals with essential interpersonal communication skills necessary to meet the ever increasing demands of modern policing. This process will include examining pre-service individuals for traits and characteristics best suited for 21st century policing followed by examination of cadet, probation, and full service milieus to include advancement into specialized services such as investigations. These examinations will focus on interpersonal skills traits and trainings commonly identified as most absence or lacking among policing agencies with first responder-type duties and responsibilities typified by uniformed personnel and crucial to meeting the principal canons of contemporary policing philosophies.

Significance and Implications of the Study

The importance of interpersonal and communication skills cannot be overstated in any civilized society, especially among those who have taken an oath to preserve its peace and serenity. These individuals often possess daunting responsibilities including the ultimate and awesome power to deprive personal liberties and even life of others (Mayo, 2006b). They should only be the best professionally qualified persons possessing the highest levels of public trust and confidence.

Recent events in policing have given rise to questions about the organization's abilities to sufficiently provide public safety in today's milieu. There is empirical research in this area with ample suggestive evidence to support the notion that these shortcomings can be attributed to inadequate and insufficient communications or interpersonal skills. In this context, the inability

to effectively communicate can completely transcend the organization from the highest ranking administrators down to the recruitment level and may be attributed to unclear policing philosophies (Dreeke, 2009; McDermott & Hulse, 2012; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010).

It is anticipated this paper will provide sound recommendations for recruiting and hiring considerations coupled with training suggestions for academy and in-service trainings necessary to develop more effective and efficient personnel with regard to interpersonal skills. Without a doubt, it is possible these same recommendations and training suggestions could also serve to improve the overall situation, conditions, and perceptions within any law enforcement organization and aid in the elicitation of investigative information. Only through effective communication practices with the ability to develop, instill and maintain trust and confidence can law enforcement profession accomplish this goal and identify and develop sources of information, effectively garner information from victims and witnesses, and successfully interview and interrogate the guilty.

Methodology

This treatise is the capstone of many months of scholarly investigation, several years of graduate studies and over 30 years of law enforcement experience in local, state and federal agencies with approximately 20 years of service as a researcher, educator and trainer in interviewing and interrogation methods. Secondary data as well as review of related empirical, theoretical, and practical findings and observations is analyzed to examine the efficacy of interpersonal skills among law enforcement personnel. Additionally, information stemming from research, data, and publications from accredited journals, textbooks, and websites of other disciplines to include, but not limited to, psychology and interpersonal communications is

presented. Additionally, observations and professional experiences are relied upon to assess application and limitations of the available research relevant to this paper. Lastly, a brief examination of two interpersonal communication theories is conducted with relevance to police. The subsequent findings are then utilized to determine the possible existing needs within policing agencies. Based on this analysis of collective information within this study, conclusions and recommendations regarding interpersonal and communication skills among policing personnel are presented.

Contribution to the Field

This paper will serve as a didactic tool for professionals in the criminal justice field such as police officers, police administrators, training and educational professionals by examining the current systems and practices encompassing interpersonal skills within U.S. law enforcement. Additionally, this paper will be informational for law enforcement administrators by identifying more qualified personnel and training necessary to ensure success necessary to meet the ever-changing paradigms in contemporary policing. In sum, this treatise will educate its readers in the increasing importance of effective communication and interpersonal skills at many different levels essential for 21st century policing.

SECTION II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The "first-contact" police interview in many instances is the first opportunity for involved parties to express their perspectives related to police intervention and, therefore, is often laden with excessive anxiety and tension. These situations provide ample opportunities for communicative misunderstandings that could result in verbal and even physical conflict often witnessed in the Western Hemisphere.

Linfoot (2007) argues frontline police officers are among the least train members within the criminal justice system. This researcher found many agencies in the U.S. require only the completion of high school or, at most, an associates degree (comprising usually of 60 to 64 hours of college) and satisfactory completion of a basic police academy.

In addition, another researcher found that 16% of frontline officers in the U.S. actually had no initial or basic police training and that the remaining 84% of officer's received on average 14 weeks of Academy training (Walters, 2003). Of those police receiving academy training, only two in five received any instruction in the elicitation of information or interpersonal skills and, when training was presented, only four hours or less was received. Bradford and Pynes (1999) examine curricula from 22 different police academies, concluding that less than 3% of academy training is expended on cognitive and decision-making areas to include interpersonal communications.

Scholarship is fraught with similar findings and, indeed, interpersonal and communication skills demonstrate far-reaching implications, applications and attribution. Particular concerns are generated when considering frontline officers are typically the primary points of contact in the vast majority police related activities to include criminal reports,

interviews, and arrests, yet may not possess or have received the necessary interpersonal communication skills to be truly effective.

Conceptualization of Interpersonal Communications

Interpersonal communications is regarded as a process of individuals used to indicate ideas, spots, some feelings for one another. Although various interpretations exist among communication scholars, Gouran, Wiethoff, and Doelger (1994) argue interpersonal communications is that form of communication in which there are few participants involved, the interactions are in close physical proximity to each other, utilizes many sensory channels, and feedback is immediate.

Interpersonal communications is most often conceptualized as a one-on-one conversant exchange with another human being. Within this realm, theorists surmise this form of communication involves social interaction between few participants in close proximity, involve many sensory channels, and provide immediate feedback (Gouran, et al., 1994). Smith (2004) argues interpersonal communications is a result of direct face-to-face relationship between interactants who are in an interdependent relationship. This interaction creates immediacy and primacy characterized by strong feedback component. Furthermore, as a relationship extends over time communication is enhanced and involves not only words but various elements of nonverbal communication. A plethora of literature exists discussing innumerable theories associated with interpersonal communications; however, for purposes of this conceptualization only one principle model will be examined.

There are several stages in the process of interpersonal communication over its extended lifecycle and a useful framework known as “coming together” in the Knapp Relational

Development Model is used for this discussion (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005). The first stage is identified as the *initial encounter* in involves first impressions in which likes and dislikes have instantaneous formation. The second stage is known as *experimenting* in which an informational exchange occurs on various general and safe topics gradually progressing to more a personal and intimate nature. If positive mutual conclusions are experienced and the interactants find it relationship mutually beneficial and *intensification* will occur. As mutuality is experiencing the relationship becomes more fulfilling, the fourth step of *integration* will occur which is characteristic of intense friendships, close business partnerships, romantic commitments, etc. Finally, bonding is reached where relationships are sealed, which in the business world formal contracts and written agreements are executed, and generally publicized.

In similar fashion, these communication scholars have also developed stages of reverse order to explain degradation, or "coming apart," of interpersonal relationships (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005). *Differentiating* is the first stage that focuses on individual differences. Secondly, *circumscribing* is when the interactants begin minimizing their communication confining it to functional topics. *Stagnation* identifies when the interaction becomes flat and personally unfulfilling to the parties and is primarily maintained due to outside interests of social or business contract. The next stage encompasses avoidance tactics of both parties and expresses mutual annoyance when an encounter occurs and is labeled the *avoidance* stage. Finally, *termination* occurs when the relationship is dissolved and all social and business contracts are absolved.

Rapport

It is virtually impossible to think of interpersonal and communication skills and not consider rapport as a vital aspect or component. Rapport is quintessentially differ among individuals and often regarded as an abstract concept absent clear, succinct definitive meaning. Because of its significance in human interaction, rapport and its role within the policing milieu will be briefly discussed.

Tickle-Degnan and Rosenthal (1990) defined rapport in terms of three components: mutual attention, positivity, and coordination. Hendrick (1990) expanded these components into feelings of mutual interest and focus (attention), feelings of friendliness and warmth (positivity), and balance and harmony (coordination). Simply stated mutual attention is the degree of interaction that the interactants experience. Positivity consist of the emotional aspect of this interaction and is characteristic of mutual liking or respect (Wojciszke, Abele, & Baryla, 2009). The pattern of reciprocal responses between the interactants, which may reflect synchrony, complementarity, or accommodation, is referred to as coordination. Although positivity is often the focus of rapport discussions, coordination appears equally as well. Holmberg (2009) argues the operationalization of rapport is an intrinsic interactional phenomenon of mutual feelings and is distinguishable from other constructs such as empathy.

Importance of Rapport in Policing

Substantial importance is placed on building rapport when interviewing witnesses and suspects, yet few studies have actually examined ‘rapport’ in investigative interviewing (Vanderhallen, Vervaeke, & Holmberg, 2011). Rapport is recognized as one of the principles and core skills necessary to successful interviewing (Shawyer, Milne, & Bull, 2009). Walsh and Bull

(2010) argue rapport building is a crucial component of the engage and explaining phase of the preparation and planning, engage and explaining, accounts, closure and evaluation (PEACE) model used in the UK for investigative interviewing. Although most investigators universally acknowledged the importance of rapport building to investigative inquiry, extreme deficiencies in the process of building rapport during actual interviewing situations were noted in observational studies (Vanderhallen, et al., 2011).

Scholarship demonstrates practitioners universally advocate the use of rapport in investigative interviews, yet their interpretations differ as to the exact meaning of rapport (Borum, Gelles, & Kleinman, 2009; Kelly, Redlich, & Miller, 2012; Russano, Narchet, Meissner, & Kleinman, 2012). These differences in rapport definitions and meanings prove problematic and may have resulted in inconsistent training on the establishment and maintaining of rapport.

Psychiatrists Othmer and Othmer (2002) dissect rapport into six stratagems are necessary when establishing and maintaining rapport: (1) putting the subject at ease; (2) expressing compassion; (3) assessing the subject; (4) showing expertise; (5) establishing authority; and (6) balancing roles. Contained within the stratagem of role balancing, these scholars argue the interviewer during the interaction must assume all the roles of an expert, an authority, and an empathetic listener which are essential to the rapport process. The interviewer must shift appropriately between each role; however, the central theme of this rapport-building process is the expressing of empathy (Othmer & Othmer, 2002).

Fisher and Geiselman (1992) stressed the importance of rapport by demonstrating empathy and personalizing the investigative interview to enhance memory and recall necessary to garner more accurate and detail rich information. Other researchers argue that report building

processes comfort victims and witnesses and increase accuracy while decreasing susceptibility for post-event misinformation particularly when open ended questions are utilized (Vallano & Compo, 2011). Other scholars emphasize rapport consists of active listening skills (Milne & Bull, 1999; St-Yves, 2006; Wolvin, 2010) while other researchers add qualities of attentiveness, and friendliness (Collins, Lincoln, & Frank, 2002, 2005).

Contrastingly, the Reid technique advocates rapport in a more confrontational milieu such as suspect or defendant interviews (Inbau, Reid, Buckley, & Jayne, 2004). Support for this approach can be found in much research while arguing empathy in police interviews is beneficial and essential to the rapport-building process with some researchers maintaining the position that it yields greater information (Fisher & Perez, 2007) and numbers of admissions from suspected offenders (Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). Oxburgh and Ost (2011) found offenders reported greater willingness and cooperation to crime confessions if the interviewer displayed empathy towards them treating them with humanity and dignity.

Furthermore, self-disclosure or sharing of personal information has been found to be significantly contributory to rapport building (Beach et al., 2004; Collins & Miller, 1994; Forgas, 2011; Hargie & Dickson, 2005; Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983; Vallano & Compo, 2011). Vallano and Compo (2011) argue the absence of self-disclosure often lead to a no-rapport condition which was perceived as “too professional" (pg. 7). Unlike St-Yves (2006), a proponent of interviewer professionalism, these researchers opt for a more casual and informal interaction intended to enhance rapport and aid interviewee recall.

Although rapport is essential to effective and meaningful interpersonal interaction, it does not take an adequate place of prominence or importance in policing (Bradford & Pynes, 1999;

Collins et al., 2005; Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). As a result, many police inquiries may not have proved as significant or yielded as much investigative data as possible.

Empathy is an Essential and Crucial Element of Rapport

In England and Wales, the Achieving Best Evidence guidelines (Home Office, 2011) advises "[a] guiding principle for developing rapport is to communicate empathy. Here the interviewer needs to demonstrate a willingness to try to understand the situation from the interviewee's perspective" (p. 16). Oxburgh and Ost (2011) argue that many definitions of empathy have been posited by scholars in psychological and medical related journals, yet in the investigative sense, a more effective operational definition would be "a reaction to one individual to the observed experiences of another" (p. 181). Taylor (2002) defines empathy as "sympathetic understanding for the explanations or feelings presented by the opposing party about their current situation" (p. 44). Thus in these contexts, the interviewer does not demonstrate empathy by simply showing empathy to the interviewee, but actually exhibits the ability to understand the interviewee's perspective by appreciating their emotions and distress through enhanced communication processes. In other words, empathy is a multidimensional phenomenon consisting of cognitive processes with affective aptitude.

Norfolk, Birdi, and Walsh (2007) posit empathy may facilitate rapport building; however, it has been found that individuals that are more empathetic to one another are likely to mimic the nonverbal behaviors of each other, thus empathy has demonstrated a direct link to mimicry (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999). Conversely, mimicry has been found to induce empathy in mimickers (Stel & Vonk, 2010). This two-way process could prove problematic with

unintentional consequences in investigative situations where an untrained or unskilled interviewer becomes biased as a result of mimicry and develop excessive empathy for a suspect.

As demonstrated there is significantly support for the importance of interpersonal and communication skills with incorporation of rapport building and empathy development. Unfortunately, frontline officers all too often perform very poorly in this area (Foley & Terrill, 2008). Undeniably, an appropriate interview style coupled with rapport building techniques to include empathy are paramount and vital to complete and accurate information as well as compelling cooperation essential to criminal case resolution.

Demonstrated Need for Improved Social (Interpersonal) Skills

McDermott and Hulse (2012) suggest that effective policing occurs when officers and the citizens they protect form partnerships to create and crime free communities and that these partnerships not only requires strong technical capabilities but enhanced interpersonal skills of the officers. Many theorists stress that frontline officers constantly interact with the public in three very common areas of police work: motor vehicle stops, criminal investigations, and domestic situations (McDermott & Hulse, 2012). The police abilities to effectively manage these situations are dependent upon their interpersonal skills (Pynes, 2001). Additionally, public perception can be significantly impacted by assessment of officers' interpersonal skills and influence their decisions and willingness to participate in investigative inquiry. Moreover, Woods (2000) emphasizes interpersonal communication skills for police are essential to the philosophy of community policing.

Early research found Westerners had adopted a more questioning attitude toward police and relied less on previous socialized beliefs while developing more respect for individual

freedom of thought and action, privacy and civil liberties (Cooper & Bradshaw, 1975). Much of this attitudinal shift was contributed to enhance police and public interaction due to legislative changes in developing militant tactics and support of individual rights and beliefs. As a result, police developed increasing reliance on social and interpersonal skills during job performance.

Brooks (2010) posits law enforcement today is better situated to address counterterrorism because of the frontline officers' abilities to investigate, follow leads, and assemble reports detailing those situations. Clarke and Newman (2007) argue that within the premise of community policing frontline officers are in better position to discover and investigate terroristic threats and protect vulnerable targets within their respective jurisdictions.

Community policing provides frontline officers an everyday presence and opportunity to communicate regularly with local residents and business owners positioning them for the likelihood to recognize subtle changes in the communities they serve (Kelling & Bratton, 2006). These frontline police are more sensitive to subtle changes within their jurisdictions and have often developed unofficial lines of communication to facilitate information sharing. Also, these officers are better situated to know Islamic and Arabian community leaders that may be willing to provide information and assist in developing sources of information concerning terrorism and criminal conduct (Clarke & Newman, 2007). Within this context, it is quintessentially necessary for police to have interpersonal and skills and understanding of cultural diversity to effectively communicate with the citizenry and garner their trust and confidence within their areas of responsibility.

The traditional philosophy of policing, also known as the standard model, is characteristic of random patrol, rapid uniform response, the appointment of police to investigate once an offense has been detected, and reliance on law enforcement and the legal system as a primary

means of trying to reduce crime and remains prominent today (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Weisburd & Eck, 2004). Within this reactive model, police will respond to crime information from the public, investigate each separate offense, and returned to random patrol duties, often without further interpersonal interaction with the public.

Furthermore, Ortmeier and Meese (2010) characterized the traditional policing as authoritarian and paramilitaristic and state frontline police are automations, oppressed by administrators, and often not provided communicative opportunities particularly within their agencies. These rank-and-file officers are excluded from policy-making matters and subjected to impersonal treatment. Furthermore, the traditional policing model often precluded individual officers from involved interactions with their constituents thereby limiting opportunities to get acquainted and develop sources of information, thus demonstrating less importance on interpersonal communications.

In supportive fashion, Manzoni and Eisner (2006) found stress to be organizational in nature and the result of poor communications across police hierarchy within the organization. These researchers surmised stress to be a major contributor factor to excessive use of force and that personnel with more advanced communication skills were often successful at avoiding violent conflict. Shane (2010) furthers this argument by stating the traditional model of policing is fraught with organizational stressors resulting from tall hierarchical structure that limits interpersonal interaction and impedes communication, not only with the citizenry, but also between frontline personnel and administrators.

In their study, Cooper and Bradshaw (1975) found more socially skilled personnel were more readily selected for more prestigious and specialized duties, such as investigations, and were also promoted leaving those perceived as less socially skilled to occupy frontline positions.

This seemingly increase in professional status often lead to advanced training in social and interpersonal skills creating an interpersonal skill deficit for the lower ranks. This action also tended to create impressions of inferiority not only with the general public, but also frontline personnel which resulted in lower morale and sense of lessened status.

Other scholarship found that police only attempted to establish rapport in interpersonal and emotion-involved types of crime such as rape (Vanderhallen, et al., 2011). Similarly, another study reported empathetic behavior by police towards suspects only occurred with suspects identified is unfortunate or need of help. Clarke and Milne (2001) found that nearly half of suspect interviews demonstrated no rapport building in suspect interviews while recognizing only seven percent improvement for witness interviews.

Birzer and Tannehill (2001; citing Oliver, 2000) suggested that the majority of problems in the workplace are due to miscommunications or failure to communicate and that interpersonal communication skill is essential to public speaking. This area has proved problematic in the traditional policing training arena in that police training endorses a take charge and give orders mentality that could prove disastrous if prematurely employed before the problem or call for service is fully understood. In this vein, Oliver (2000) maintains police recruits should be instructed on basic interpersonal communications with emphasis on listening skills. Pynes (2001) argues officers' social and interpersonal skills are inherent and vital to community policing and that training curricula should extend beyond memorization of loss, rules, and procedures to include disciplines such as community relations, interpersonal skills, problem-solving processes, public speaking, and organizational skills necessary for successful community interaction.

The nature of police interactions has shown through research to have impact on victim recovery from trauma, factor to police satisfaction, and to be a determinant to cooperation and

willfulness of interactants within the criminal justice system (Foley & Terrill, 2008). In this regard, the evaluation process for police effectiveness often overlooks the socioemotive factors important to victims and opting to view crime prevention for successful policing. Foley and Terrill (2008) found police were more likely to comfort victims that were female, middle- to upper-class victims, and those exhibiting signs of injury or depression. However, these researchers found police with college degrees or more years of experience were less likely to engage in comforting behavior when encountering these types of situations.

Although police education and experience are generally associated with higher levels of knowledge and job performance, research demonstrated victims often suffer from not receiving comforting behavior that is essentially expected as part of police services (Foley & Terrill, 2008; citing Mastrofski, 1999). Overall, the expected benefits of police education and experience were mitigated by the decreases of vital socioemotive response.

This area proves problematic when attempting to assess police effectiveness in providing aid and comfort to their citizenry which is vastly different than examining behaviors associated with arresting or reporting duties. Obviously, emotional response may provoke making arrest or following reports but the presence of overt expression of emotion is often deemed not necessary. As a result, persons not comfortable with the overt expression of emotion are unlikely to extend comfort and empathy to others in spite of other situational or interpersonal characteristics (Foley & Terrill, 2008).

Oxburgh and Ost (2011) argue the today's criminal milieu creates ample opportunities for police officers to vicariously suffer traumatization when interviewing in highstakes crimes such as murders and sexual-related crimes. These crime-specific situations frequently cause police officers to experience very powerful and, oftentimes, painful emotions producing attitudes that

can have significant negative impact on the interpersonal interactions with others for unspecified durations. More robust methods of managing these interviews have been demonstrated necessary to ensure the obtainment of quality testimonial evidence while avoiding contamination (Sandoval, 2003).

Police officers are often trained to suppress emotions and remain emotionally detached which can serve to compound this issue (Foley & Terrill, 2008). This inability or preference for masking emotions, to include empathy, could be counterproductive to the rapport-building process in establishing that comfort necessary for individuals to fully cooperate and generate thorough, accurate and complete information that may be necessary for investigative purposes (Bourg, 2010; Fein, 2006; Fisher & Geiselman, 1992; Foley & Terrill, 2008; Gordon & Fleisher, 2011; Inbau, et al., 2004; Vallano & Compo, 2011; Walters, 2003; Zulawski & Wicklander, 2001).

Several studies have shown that witnesses generate more detailed and accurate information under rapport conditions than in the absence thereof (Collins, et al., 2002, 2005; Vallano & Compo, 2011). Similar results were recognized in interviews with prisoners (Vanderhallen, et al., 2011). Holmberg (2004), while examining relationships between information quality and interview style, found the humanitarian interview style yielded far greater accurate information and was characterized as positive, accommodating, empathetic, engaging, cooperative, and helpful. This same theorists later found interactants were less likely to engage in social bonding in the absence of good rapport and intended to react with general dislike for one another (Holmberg, 2009). It was also found that witnesses tended to report greater amounts of misinformation when investigators failed to sufficiently establish rapport (Vallano & Compo, 2011). Furthermore, Holmberg and Christiansen (2002) found direct positive

relationships between admissions of crime and humanitarian interviewing styles. These two theorists also found the humanitarian interviewing style promotes rapport through demonstrating empathy and interview personalization.

Burgoon, Buller, and Guerrero (1995) effectively demonstrate the correlation between social skills and nonverbal communication and the successful ability to detect deception by the parties engaged in the interpersonal interaction. The findings clearly outline the need for enhanced training in these areas of interpersonal communications to be effective in securing the truth in the policing realm.

Counter to traditional policing**,** contemporary policing requires more community- and problem-oriented abilities. These officers must possess skills consistent with being information processors, community organizers, crime analysts, counselors, street-corner politicians, arresting authorities, school liaisons, and community leaders (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010). To be successful, frontline police must be self-discipline, self-motivated, and innovative while exhibiting "competencies such as leadership, initiative, and imagination that have traditionally been associated with higher-ranking officers" (Ortmeier & Meese III, p. 224). The emergence of new policing philosophies also requires officers to possess and demonstrate a vast array of technical, cognitive, and affective skills to include enhanced written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills often found in the more educated (Carter & Wilson, 2006).

In sum, a plethora of scholarship exists to substantiate the significance and importance of interpersonal skills as a vital key component to human interaction, both professionally and personally (Dreeke, 2009). Regardless of study interpretation, the need for increased training in social and interpersonal skills was obvious (Cooper & Bradshaw, 1975). This demonstrated need for training and education is particularly urgent for frontline officers and greatly emphasizes

needs for more consistent and periodic training in these human skill areas. Countless theorists even argue there is a direct correlation between increased proficiency in interpersonal and communication skills and higher education (Paynich, 2009).

Police Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring Practices

White and Escobar (2008) posit finding and attracting the most qualified candidates for a position in law enforcement is the goal of recruiting. Other studies reflect the primary focus of recruiting efforts is to *screen out* inferior candidates as opposed to identifying superior candidates (Henson, et al., 2010).

The selection and hiring process varies by a number of variables as determined by the employing organization or agency (Blau, 1994; Daniel, 2001; Decker & Huckabee, 2002; Means & Lowry, 2011; Whetstone, Reed, & Turner, 2006). The most comprehensive processes include cognitive skills or civil service examinations, background checks and investigations, medical examinations, drug screening, physical strength and agility tests, situational tests, polygraph examinations, psychological testing, and oral interviews (Decicco, 2000; Ho, 1999; McCrie, 2001; Schmalleger, 2009). This *multiple-hurdle method* is not always based in making the best selections, but rather in eliminating the incompetent (Sanders, 2008) and is commonly known as *weeding out* or *selecting out* (Scrivner, 2006).

White and Escobar (2008) maintain police officers today have greater expectations than ever been before. Duties of today's officers not only encompass prevention and solution of crime, dispute resolution, and empathetic responses to community concerns, but now officers are also required to employ sophisticated problem-solving techniques, to actively engage the public,

and to protect citizens from threats of terrorism. Even so, it seems there are no allowances or consideration for communicative abilities in the traditional settings.

Many studies in this area reveal correlations between personality traits, negative predictors of police performance, civil litigation, and officer success (Henson, et al., 2010; Manis, Archbold, & Hassell, 2008; Rydberg & Terrill, 2010; Sanders, 2008; Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas, 2008; White & Escobar, 2008). While selecting in is the most desirable outcome, many researchers would agree today's selection method of choice acts more to eliminate unfavorable candidates rather than identify the best candidates (Sanders, 2008). Under these types of circumstances, it seems that identifying and selecting those individuals with the strongest interpersonal and communication skills may suffer at the expense of less qualified.

McKeever and Kranda (2001) argued it is imperative to recruit, select, and retain highly qualified employees committed and dedicated to policing. Twenty-first century policing necessitates identifying, recruiting, and selecting those individuals dedicated to a service-oriented profession (Scrivner, 2006). Certainly, today's law enforcement environment requires updating and new approaches to recruiting and hiring necessary to address increasing responsibilities to include validated and consistent methods of evaluating and assessing interpersonal and communication skills of candidates (Capsambelis & Schnering, 2011).

Consideration for Higher Education

For over a century many criminologists have envisioned a college-educated police profession, a vision still unrealized (Buerger, 2004). The origins of the notion of college-educated officers is the resultant of two issues: allegations of importance of police professionalism and necessity of changing police attitudes (Shernock, 1992). Today, this original

conceptualization has been expanded in a number of ways when incorporating aspects of community policing.

Theorists argue higher education increases the value and development of police officers in multiple ways and enhances their ability to successfully perform (Heath, 2011; Paterson, 2011). When comparing college degrees based in criminal justice and police studies to other degrees, Paterson (2011) argues for departure from pure criminal justice discipline and offers "higher education promotes creativity and critical thinking ahead of control and the potential to counteract the cultural instincts of criminal justice institutions through flexible value-systems that are more suited to the demands of community oriented policing and an enhanced focus on ethical and professional behavior" (pg. 294). In this vein, an argument is made for more studies in the area of social sciences related to diversity, human behavior, and interpersonal and communication skills.

To further demonstrate the complexity of contemporary policing, it is very appropriately pointed out social scientists that draw valid conclusions by analyzing databases do not have the necessary skills to teach others on how to deal with distraught, intoxicated, scared, and aggressive or deceitful individuals. Buerger opines that practitioners with the ability to "integrate macro-level social science knowledge with street-level exponential learning" are extremely scarce (p. 30).

As argument for requiring advanced degrees among police, one theorist summarizes:

> [a]ll things being equal, the college-educated individual is more qualified better prepared than a high school graduate the college-educated person has more experience with people knew situations. His or her responsibility and adaptability to new surroundings have been tested. In addition, he or she has been exposed to various cultural characteristics and ethical racial backgrounds. This exposure should eliminate or reduce prejudices and bias. More importantly, a formal education should teach individuals to check their judgments regarding prejudices in favor of more tranquil analysis (Palmiotto, 1999, p. 72)

It is universally acknowledged that college-educated officers better perform policing tasks, communicate more effectively, demonstrate flexibility and diversity in handling difficult situations, and adapt better to organizational change (Sherwood, 2000; Vodicka, 1994). Schmalleger (2009) notes "the Police Executive Research Forum [PERF] found that police agencies that hire educated officers accrue these benefits: (1) better written reports, (2) enhanced communications with the public, (3) more effective job performance, (4) fewer citizen complaints, (5) greater initiative, (6) wiser use of discretion, (7) heightened sensitivity to racial and ethnic issues, and (8) fewer disciplinary problems. Scholarship is abundant with regard to these observations that seem to indicate higher education generates increased quality of police with better coping skills resulting in less aggression yielding far fewer citizen complaints than those less educated (Johnston & Cheurprakobkit, 2002; Manis, et al., 2008; Mayo, 2006a; Paynich, 2009; Telep, 2011; Terrill & McCluskey, 2002; Walker, Alpert, & Kenney, 2000).

Police recruits with baccalaureate degrees demonstrated better communication skills, made better discretionary decisions and possessed greater empathy while exhibiting more tolerance for others (Carter & Sapp, 1992). Worden (1990) posited similar findings in that degreed recruits exercised better judgment and problem solving skills than those without college degrees, all of which are crucial elements within community policing.

Some scholars argue higher education among police personnel is required or preferred for promotional consideration (Mayo, 2006a; Truxillo, Bennett, & Collins, 1998; Yearwood, 2003). Polk and Armstrong (2001) found supportive data in that personnel completing college and graduate work were significantly more likely to hold administrative and supervisory positions than those with high school or less education. Their study implications demonstrated that higher education enhances officers' probabilities to promote regardless of agencies' preemployment

condition for college degree. However, there are drawbacks to having more educated police forces. “Educated officers are more likely to leave police work, question orders, and request re-assignment than noneducated officers” (Schmalleger, 2009, p. 213).

As for separation from police service, several explanations have been studied. Yearwood (2003) found limited opportunity for promotion as one of the leading causes of separation. Furthermore, another researcher argues some police with advanced degrees have reported acts of retaliation with motives ranging from envy to fear (Friedmann, 2006). These degreed officers advised they felt they were viewed as threats to non-degreed colleagues’ careers.

A lack of consensus has long existed between criminal justice scholars, administrators, and police field evaluators as to definitions of police performance when addressing higher education and policing (Bruns, 2010; Henson, et al., 2010; Sanders, 2003; Truxillo, et al., 1998; White, 2008). To compound this problem, many theorists have surmised that the skills necessary and often employed in community policing are intangible and often occur outside the purview of supervisors who are tasked with evaluating performance (Pynes, 2001; Sanders, 2008; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993; White & Escobar, 2008). This inability to observe and objectively evaluate police performance to include communicative skills has created extreme difficulty in justifying education and training curricula changes from traditional to more contemporary disciplines (Bruns, 2010; McDermott & Hulse, 2012; Sanders, 2008; White, 2008).

Paynich (2009) argues overwhelming that college-educated police officers are better prepared for meeting the demands of contemporary policing. Most specific to this paper, this theorist posits college-educated police officers demonstrate superior interpersonal qualities consistent with better communication skills, more tolerance of others, higher degrees of professionalism, generate fewer citizen complaints and disciplinary actions, appear more open-

minded, and exhibit greater ethical behavior. In this study, college-educated officers self-reported higher-quality job performance, greater problem-solving and conflict resolution abilities, and possess better interpersonal working relationships as a result of better communication skills (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Paynich, 2009).

Kelling and Bratton (2006) argue higher education for police officers would strengthen and aid their interaction and participation in federal Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) at a multitude of levels. It is universally known that JTTFs are administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and consists of agents from most all federal agencies with counterparts from local, county, and state law enforcement agencies. Kelling and Bratton's argument has significance when considering most federal agencies require college degrees for entry-level positions (Schmalleger, 2009).

Higher education was also found to provide officers with greater appreciation for globalization and its nexus the localized crime activity (Paterson, 2011). Paterson (2011) posits that social changes resulting from globalization with its impact on crime nature and policing demands have added complexity to the police role required more advanced skill-set. These requirements have called for improved police professionalism, accountability, and legitimacy that higher education can afford and that a model that integrates both training and education focusing on communication and conflict resolution based on andragogy theory is warranted.

With direct relationship to investigative inquiry, Rassin, Eerland,and Kuijpers (2010) concluded that more highly educated and trained legal professionals tended to be more objective in the initial stages of a criminal investigation and were less prone to confirmation and response biases. This study yielded no support for the idea that legal fact finders are more interested in

guilt confirmation or guilt-presumptiveness than exoneration as argued by other theorists (Kassin, Goldstein, & Savitsky, 2003; Leo, 2009).

In sum, when considering higher education and police performance, a variety of themes emerge indicating college graduates: possess better written and oral communication skills; demonstrate greater professionalism and tolerance for others; exhibit enhanced understanding of human behavior; are more autonomous and well-rounded thinkers with higher problem-solving skills; exercise greater ethical conduct; demonstrate levels of authoritarianism; reflect greater intellectual development; exude increased self-confidence, morale and motivation; received fewer citizen complaints; require fewer disciplinary measures; and overall exhibit better public relation skills than their non-college-educated counterparts (Bruns, 2010). In spite of these vast, compelling and enumerated benefits, less than 1% of U.S. police departments require baccalaureate degrees for entry-level police (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010). It is worthy to note that some scholarship has found little significance between two- and four-year college degrees (Johnston & Cheurprakobkit, 2002).

Inferior salaries for entry-level police proves problematic in attracting and maintaining higher educated police (Bowman, Carlson, Colvin, & Green, 2006; Gordon, 2004; Schmalleger, 2009). Yearwood (2003) argued starting salaries were actually less a concern than in later stages of employments. Regardless, this inferior fiscal aspect as common to most police departments have resulted in lessening educational requirements, in many instances, requiring only a high school diploma for applicants (Bruns, 2010; U.S. Department of Justice, 2010).

Despite the articulacy of both sides of the college education argument, future policing will continue moving toward college degree requirements (White & Escobar, 2008). White and Escobar (2008) maintain police officers today have greater expectations than ever been before.

Duties of today's officers not only encompass prevention and solution of crime, dispute resolution, and empathetic responses to community concerns, but now officers are also required to employ sophisticated problem-solving techniques, to actively engage the public, and to protect citizens from threats of terrorism. Although empirical evidence linking higher education to improved performance is varied, it remains clear a college education can develop and will enhance the skills required in modern law enforcement.

Police Training and Education

Formal police training is a product of the reform era and was implemented to professionalize and legitimize policing (Bucqueroux, 2007; Croissant, 2009; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967; Schmalleger, 2009; Stojkovic, et al., 2008). Traditional police training emphasizes cognitive and psychomotor learning, but often refrains from training ethical decision-making and problem solving to cadets. Problem-solving and decision-making are integral to contemporary policing; however, the traditional police training methods may actually curtail development of critical thinking and problem solving capabilities (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010).

Many police experts agree that the vast amount of police training, especially in the academies, is inconsistent with today's policing (Chappell, 2008; Henson, et al., 2010; White & Escobar, 2008). Studies have found ninety percent of officer training is dedicated to crime-related activities while only 10% to 15% of their actual duty time is tied to those activities (Pynes, 2001). This lack of training relevance is becoming more pronounced as more agencies shift and adopt community policing strategies with greater emphasis being placed on interpersonal and communication abilities.

Independent decision-making is a primary operation for most police officers and advance training should focus on developing problem-solving and decision-making skills in conjunction with communication skills (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010). Ortmeier and Meese (2010) contend ethical decision-making and problem solving are merging as trends in police training and create environments "that attempts to move learning to the higher-level domains of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation" (Ortmeier & Meese III, p. 160).

These shifts from traditional policing emphasize the officers' interpersonal and social skills requiring officers to have more discretion, more abilities to identify and analyze community problems, and to solve those problems with their communities. In this vein, community policing places extreme importance on expanding traditional training curricula to include skills for community relations; coordinating community meetings, activities and programs; public speaking; interpersonal skills; and problem-solving tasks (Chappell, 2008).

Inferior Training and Education

Many theorists argue that today's frontline officers are inadequately prepared to handle the ever-increasing and changing demands of contemporary policing (Linfoot, 2007, 2008). Buerger (2004) contends most of today's police training curricula and social science-based criminal justice programs are traditional in nature and failed to prepare students with appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities to combat more sophisticated criminal elements. The current paradox in police training is that the majority of training curriculum is directed only a small percentage of their actual duties (Bradford & Pynes, 1999; Chappell, 2008). One theorist argues communications, diversity, problem solving, and police community relations are areas of chief neglect in today's trading milieu (Chappell, 2008). Birzer (1999) argued research indicates that

only 10 to 20% of police officers activity involves crime-related matters while the remaining is service-related and that subjects such as communication and problem solving academically suffer when compared to other "mechanical and technical aspects of policing" (p. 17). German (as cited by Pynes, 2001) states the police spend only 10 to 15% of their time in actual crime-fighting activities which comprises of 90% of their training time.

An earlier researcher found that 46 states mandated academy training in patrol, criminal investigation, use of deadly force while little time was allocated to interpersonal aspects of policing although previous research clearly demonstrated its significance and compelling importance (Meadows, 1987). Varricchio (1998) found law enforcement administrators have been extremely hesitant to embrace the educational movement necessary for the transition to community policing. More recently, Chappell (2008) found today's police training still focuses more on traditional aspects of physical activities, to include firearms training, physical training, defensive tactics, and driving skills, while knowledge aspects centered on law, arrest procedures, traffic enforcement, and officer safety. As a result, she concluded communications, diversity, problem solving, and police community relations significantly suffered at the expense of these other topics.

Another researcher found that 16% of frontline officers in the U.S. actually had no initial or basic police training and that the remaining 84% of officer's received on average 14 weeks of Academy training (Walters, 2003). Of those police receiving academy training, only two in five received any instruction in the elicitation of information or interpersonal skills and, when training was presented, only four hours or less was received. Moreover, Bradford and Pynes (1999) examine curricula from 22 different police academies, concluding that less than 3% of

basic academy training is expended on cognitive and decision-making areas to include interpersonal communications.

Training delivery methods were also found to have significant impact on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of police. Chappell (2008) argues that traditional training styles are used to convey knowledge in subject areas such as law and communications using a pedagogical approach as employed to teach children. Birzer and Tannehill (2001) argue this style of delivery in lecture format emphasizes mastery, obedience and discipline, while narrowing the policing focus that is counterintuitive to community policing.

Other scholars found that while major case resolution was based largely on effective interviewing practices of victims and witnesses, only cursory training was received in police academies with little or no follow training post-academy (Fisher & Geiselman, 1992). New investigators often did not receive any additional training with the assumption interviewing skills would be learned on the job. With regard to these earlier findings, Werth (2011) argues more recent literature indicates little to nothing has transpired to effectively change and improve the development or acquisition of necessary interviewing capabilities.

In a study of the PEACE model, Dando, Wilcock, and Milne (2008) found that the majority of frontline witness interviews were conducted by the least experienced in the least trained investigative interviewers. These interviewers expressed feelings of inadequacy pertaining to their training and experience pressure and stress due to being generally ill-equipped for conducting an interview.

The economic conditions of today are partly to blame for inferior training experienced in much of this country (Nelson, 2006; Security Director's Report, 2012). Nelson (2006) argues that police education and training has not fundamentally changed in generations although seemingly

cutting edge technology such as computer enhanced training tools and software-driven displays have emerged and are cost-effective.

Many public agencies today have experienced sizable funding cuts for any number of enumerated reasons. Nelson (2006) contends in such cases training most often suffers as the first budget item to be cut because administrators erroneously see education and training as future concerns. Nelson argues this problem partially resides with police education not fundamentally changing for decades in spite of new innovations.

McDermott and Hulse (2012) identified interpersonal skills as an essential component in successful policing and that, unfortunately, many agencies did not train or value the weight this area in their personnel. Some law enforcement agencies do provide communications-based instruction for trainees; however, learning objectives are not clearly linked defined in lesson plans. In these cases, class instruction is often simply limited to instructing attendees to use their interpersonal skills in various situations. With this lack of clarity for course objectives and skill implementation, it is impossible to evaluate competencies for the communications training curriculum and implementation into field situations.

Furthermore, McDermott and his colleague (2012) posit that the very nature of policing and a constant interaction with other persons at so many different levels in the performance of their official duties further illustrate the need for interpersonal skills and diversity training at the academy level. Similarly, Chermak, Freilich, and Shemtob (2009) found demonstrated need for additional training in understanding the mindset and cultural differences of far right extremists. Poor communication skills with others can only foster poor community relations, promote inefficient policing, and will hinder even the most technically proficient organizations.

Suggested Need for Police Professionalization

During the 20th century, police education and training greatly expanded around the world and were seen as a cornerstone for police professionalization and modernization (Cordner & Shain, 2011). However, Cordner and Shain argue police education and training of the 21st century were most greatly impacted by globalization in current economic downturn. Pinizzotto, Bohrer, and Davis (2011) argue that American law enforcement is professional in many regards and serves as a model for all police worldwide. These theorists maintain training that conveys knowledge, skills, and abilities are a significant factor in forming the foundation of professionalism.

Capsambelis and Schnering (2011) argue that traditionally law enforcement agencies have announced pending promotional examinations to sworn personnel often meeting only minimal criteria such as years of service and satisfactory performance evaluations. These promotion processes typically involve written examinations to assess the candidate's job-related knowledge, oral interview boards, and perhaps assessment centers. The candidates successfully completing this phase and placed at or near the top of the promotion list are then considered for promotion. As a result, the candidate who scored well on the examinations and interview is often promoted without adequate preparation to assume a role of leadership to the dismay of many agencies. As evident, this traditional practice of promotion only superficially examines interpersonal skills and abilities to effectively communicate and is often absent specific criteria while only rooted in subjectivity of the interview board.

In direct contrast, Capsambelis and Schnering (2011) examined a more contemporary method of promotion that incorporates a grammar and report writing exercise and an oral review board that has been developed, administered, and scored by outside consultants. This method of

promotion epitomizes the importance of effective communication and demonstrates a direct relationship to professionalism while ensuring only the best qualified are considered.

In another study, researchers found that unnecessary use of force and use of offensive language was significantly contributory to judgments of serious misconduct as determined by observing citizens (Seron, Pereira, & Kovath, 2004). Seron and his colleagues found that citizens expect officers to behave professionally and treat everyone equally regardless of race or culture. These findings infer that the ability to effectively communicate absent discourteous and offense of language is essential to the perception of professionalism as supported in earlier studies of community policing by Thacher (as cited by Seron, et al., 2004). In similar fashion, this study found significant differences among the races as for tolerances of police behavior and the legitimacy of authority during the interaction between involved parties demonstrating need and appreciation for greater interpersonal and communication skills with sensitivity for others.

In conclusion, significant empirical evidence exists to support direct and indirect relationships between professionalization and interpersonal and communication skills. It is reasonable to conclude that higher education may create perceived professionalism by instilling better coping mechanisms, higher tolerances for others, and problem-solving aptitudes while also creating better communicative abilities.

Training Considerations

Yuille, Marxsen and Cooper (1999) argue that interviewing should be deemed a professional activity requiring enhanced knowledge and skills that cannot be simply learned in a few hours. Effective interviewing requires a broad knowledge base and specific set of

interviewing skills that can only be acquired through extensive study and master through practice and experience.

Some theorists argue that contemporary law enforcement administrators should consider rapport-building aspects of interpersonal communication essential in academy training venues (Collins, et al., 2005). Collins and his colleagues (2005) found investigative interviewing training very limited when compared against the importance of intelligence-gathering and allocated time for "purposeful conversations" (pg. 6). Rapport-building has repeatedly proven to be extremely cost-effective and simplest method of producing accurate information in investigative interviewing.

Similarly, McDermott and Hulse (2012) stressed the need for police academies to develop an effective structure for interpersonal skills instruction. The curricula should be tailored to contemporary policing philosophies providing trainees with a solid foundation necessary to enter the workforce and communicate effectively and efficiently with their citizenry building partnerships and safer communities.

Researchers have found that the learning styles and preference of police personnel are rarely considered when developing curriculum (Landry, 2011) and that the manner in which instruction is delivered significantly influences outcomes once police trainees are put into service (Birzer, 2003; Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; White & Escobar, 2008). These scholars argue that basic training within the traditional policing philosophies exhibiting paramilitaristic, punitive, and authoritarian qualities as characteristic of pedagogy serving not only to hinder learning experience, but dissuades critical thinking, creativity, independent thinking, and decision-making. This method of training is counterintuitive to the goals and outcomes sought for those entering community policing.

Contrastingly, andragogy has emerged as an effective adult learning technique and has demonstrated predominance in many professional fields including criminal justice (Birzer, 2003; White & Escobar, 2008). The andragogical approach encourages autonomy and highlights self-directed learning and develops interpersonal skills by encouraging discussion and active debate while promoting critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making (Birzer, 2003; Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). This approach is a departure from the overly militaristic environment of traditional academies which produces "a cops as soldiers mentality" (White & Escobar, p. 124). This style of teaching and learning is most conducive to the qualities and characteristics sought for contemporary policing personnel (Chappell, 2008).

Birzer and Tannehill (2001) argue that contemporary police officers need extensive training in the area of cultural diversity and how individuals of different cultures communicate. Officers need to be sensitized to cultural differences to promote understanding and effective communication with those possessing different backgrounds from their own.

Birzer (1999) maintains many similarities exist between community policing philosophy and andragogy. Community policing requires law enforcement to be self-directed and able to immediately solve problems within their respective jurisdictions. Combining andragogical theory and concepts into the training milieu can substantially assist policing personnel to develop and hone these important skills and abilities. Incorporating this theory into police curricula could promote and enhance problem solving capabilities with immediate implementation into the context of their communities.

In summary, Chappell (2008) argues in support that contemporary police training requires substantive change in curricula as well as delivery methods. She maintains innovative training programs should recognize the police recruits need not learn just traditional skills of

policing (e.g. officer safety, mechanics of arrest, marksmanship), but also require in-depth studies in topics such as problem solving, diversity and communication skills. In similar fashion, Kelling and Bratton (2006) argue to proactively attack terrorism, police must acquire specialized training and skills of this nature to be effective and successful.

Distinction between Training and Education

Although often seen as synonymous, education and training are fundamentally different (Buerger, 2004; Haberfeld, 2002). Education entails learning general concepts, terms, policies, practices and theories often covering subject matter in broad scope (Haberfeld, 2002). It stresses skills necessary to analyze different situations correctly; both communicate information and to effectively defend an opinion orally and in writing; garner insights of related situations under different circumstances; gather information through various methods of research; create alternatives and solutions to diverse situations, and through and through various media learn new facts and ideas from others. In this framework, education prepares students for any training regimen, profession, or philosophy.

In sum, education design is intended to build the ability to critically analyze new situations, engage in new learning as appropriate, and to critically think (Buerger, 2004). Haberfeld (2002) summarizes "goals of education include teaching people to recognize, categorize, evaluate, and understand different types of phenomena; to interact and communicate effectively with others; to think for themselves; and to predict the problem outcomes of competing solutions" (pp. 32-33).

By comparison, training involves the systematic acquisition of particular skills to achieve certain ends (Buerger, 2004). Haberfeld (2002) argues training comprises subject matter usually

narrow in scope and involves two stages: (1) presentation and explanation of prescribed procedures; and (2) execution of prescribed procedures to the point of being reflexive. Within this regard, training goals and body the belief individuals will revert to their training in high stress situations (Buerger, 2004). Training them is regarded as experiential and goal oriented focusing on the most effective and efficient manner to accomplish a task of situational specificity. The goal of training is to instruct individuals in specific methods of performing a task or responding in particular situations.

In an ideal world, education and training should complement each other, but within this theoretical framework, it is easy to understand and comprehend why education is essential and vital to the cognitive, and interpersonal and communicative needs of community policing. With due regard, other duties and tasks typically associated with traditional policing and involving high stress situations and events are arguably better serve by training.

Post-Training Issues and Concerns

Policing today is regarded more as a craft than a science, thus such measures are not necessarily effective in assessing good policing (Sanders, 2008). Researchers have consistently found disparity in officer evaluation processes with extensive variance in performance measures. As a result, good performance is extremely difficult to measure and may be more subjective.

Much of the recent research on police performance has focused on operational effectiveness and not officer performance (Sanders, 2008). This theorist maintains many desirable traits for police uniformly lack consistency making it difficult to link job performance to psychological traits. Characteristics and skills such as flexibility, and sensitivity, and empathy tend to garner more inconsistency and evaluated less. Early evaluations often relied on crime-

related activities such as arrests and citation issued as effective measures of performance (Skolnick, 1966; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993; White, 2008). In these instances, it appears organizations are utilizing the goal model of operational effectiveness which is more traditional in nature and not conducive of more contemporary policing methods (Stojkovic, et al., 2008).

Henson et al. (2010) studied evaluations for in-service performance once the recruits completed academy training and assumed street duties. The evaluation criteria most often mirrored traditional-policing performance measures similar to those used in academy training. Conspicuously absent in evaluation criteria are qualities, characteristic, and traits associated with knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary in community policing. Most notably were decision-making and problem-solving abilities along with interpersonal and communication skills. These voids of certain evaluation criteria adversely impact some categories of police that have been found superior in other aspects associated with community policing.

At the first annual evaluation, recruits who had prior law enforcement experience and higher physical-agility scores in the academy enjoyed positive feedback while females tend to suffer (Henson, et al., 2010). In the second annual evaluation, only females and non-whites experienced negative findings. Overall, females suffered while those with higher physical-agility ratings benefited with better evaluations.

Additionally, female police typically opt for less aggressive means in problem-solving to the than their male counterparts (David & Lyons-Ruth, 2005; Taylor et al., 2000). This difference in resolving police issues tends to limit activating legal remedies generating less numbers of arrests and citations directly impacting traditional evaluation criteria (Henson, et al., 2010; White, 2008).

Historically, female police more readily identified their role as service-oriented and were more prone to engage in sympathy and humor during interactions (Greenwald, 1976). Roter and her colleagues (2004) argue females were more apt to depart from ineffective communication practices for more effective means and scored better than their male counterparts during skills training. Females demonstrated a greater propensity for open-ended questions and exhibited greater use of empathy statements. This study reflected males demonstrated increased problem solving abilities while females tended to engage in partnerships and support for others.

Research has found older recruits and female recruits generally demonstrate qualities of maturity, better decision-making and discretion, reduced complaint rates and were found highly complementary to more contemporary policing methods (Chappell, 2008; White, 2008). Also, Henson et al. (2010) reflect that female officers and officers that were older recruits during recruitment generally received lower in-service evaluation scores, but also experienced less complaints.

Paoline and Terrill (2007) found significant relationships between levels of education and experience as associated with amount of force employed during citizen encounters. Their research demonstrated officers with any college education often used less verbal force when compared to those with less education and that those officers with four-year degrees demonstrated significant reduction of physical force.

Henson et al. (2010) demonstrates positive correlation between low cognitive skills scores, high physical-agility, prior law enforcement and military experience with use of force complaints and found poor academy performance is predictive of problem officers. Manis and her colleagues (2007) found officers with four-year college degrees received much fewer complaints than those without. Other researchers found similar results for lower complaint rates

among those with just two years of college education (Lersch & Kunzman, 2001). In this respect not only does a college education better prepare persons for policing, but also there is also mounting evidence that such serves to reduce agency liabilities (Carter & Sapp, 1990; Mayo, 2006b) and lessening litigation concerning police misconduct or use of excessive force (Kappeler, Sluder, & Alpert, 1994; Lersch & Kunzman, 2001; Manis, et al., 2008; Rydberg & Terrill, 2010).

Henson et al. (2010) state those with better physical agility scores received more complaints, while females received fewer. Also, several studies revealed male candidates with prior law enforcement and military experience generate more complaints than those without prior experience (Fyfe & Kane, 2005; Henson, et al., 2010). Although unexamined, an argument could be made that younger male officers are more competitive due to testosterone levels and prone to aggression (McAndrew, 2009). Studies have found higher levels of testosterone in males directly contributed to competitive behavior and aggression (Archer, 2006; McAndrew, 2009). However, Rydberg and Terrill (2010) found evidence that college education does significantly reduce the likelihood of aggression and use of force. Regardless, there appears to be a positive correlation between higher education and better communication skills with a negative correlation of each to aggressive behavior.

Within policing, theorists identify police subculture or occupational socialization and police working personality as possible causes to new recruits adopting the same behaviors prone to complaints (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Schmalleger, 2009; Stojkovic, et al., 2008). It is well documented historically that police officers learn aggressive behaviors from their peers (Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993). As possible explanation, other researchers found officers with higher

complaints were also more productive and apt to engage in positive policing therefore leading to increased exposure (Terrill & McCluskey, 2002).

As to female officers having lower complaints, additional explanation may be found in their coping mechanisms for field situations. Females, more than males, are prone to engage in less aggressive fashion while enlisting support from others (David & Lyons-Ruth, 2005; Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2002; Greenwald, 1976; Taylor, et al., 2000). Chappell (2008) argues that females may be more suited for community policing tasks since they are more empathetic. In similar fashion, Langworthy and Travis (2002) contend females typically outperform males in areas such as de-escalation techniques, problem solving and communication skills. The combinations of these skills tend to resolve conflict without legal force fostering community acceptance consistent with community policing ideology while minimizing citizen complaints.

Without doubt, ready arguments could be made from the literature to substantiate police performance and behaviors, both positive and negative, as products of police subculture (Bradford & Pynes, 1999; Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Ellison, 2006; Schmalleger, 2009; Stojkovic, et al., 2008) and social conformity (Berns et al., 2005; Zollman, 2010). It appears, perhaps, the only real solutions to curtail aberrant police conduct and encourage professionalism among police is for policing organizations to fully adopt community policing philosophies and then properly recruit, select, and hire the best qualified individuals providing superior education and training consistent with those philosophies to include enhanced interpersonal and communication abilities.

Summary

Unquestionably, the interpersonal and communications inabilities of frontline officers demonstrate far-reaching implications and applications in all human interaction much of which are beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is vastly apparent that to be successful and truly effective in policing today higher educated personnel must possess, hone, and be adequately trained in areas involving human skills areas.

SECTION III: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

While an extensive number of interpersonal communications theories exist, this section will only examine two with import to contemporary policing. Uncertainty reduction and communication competency theories are elected for this purpose since they appear to possess significant relevance to the everyday duties of most all police personnel, especially the frontline officer. Within this framework, each theory is summarized with its principle tenets followed by briefly discussed as they relate to and are employed in policing.

Uncertainty Reduction Theory

This theory argues that initial interactions between persons unknown to one another involve processes necessary to reduce uncertainty about the other and form an opinion as to likes or dislikes (Littlejohn & Foss, 2007). During initial interaction, individuals formulate personal strategies to accomplish this goal and during moments of high uncertainty exercise more vigilance while relying more on situational data. This theory also asserts that higher degrees of uncertainty create distances between people and that nonverbal expressiveness aids to reduce uncertainty (Jang & Tian, 2012). According to Littlejohn and Foss (2007), uncertainty is reduced in three ways: (1) passive strategies such as observing the person; (2) active strategies such as seeking information about the person; and (3) interactive strategies such as self-disclosure and asking questions.

Earlier scholarship significantly substantiated that uncertainty among interactants is reduced as self-disclosure, displays of nonverbal warmth, and similarity levels increased (Collins & Miller, 1994). Another theorist found that uncertainty reduction occurred with continued

interaction and increased disclosure while also being associated with decreased question-asking (Williams, 1990).

Forgas (2011) argues that while self-disclosure positively reduces uncertainity and demonstrates a direct effect on an individual's mood, it also serves as one of the most important and effective means of initiating and enhancing relational intimacy and provides mechanism to maintain and manage interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, evidence now exists indicating consistency with the recent affect-cognition theories supporting the existence of mood affects on judgments and memories (Forgas, 2011).

Certainly within the parameters of policing and the elicitation of information process, many applications of this theory are readily apparent. It is universally understood that positive interpersonal interaction and rapport are conducive to the investigative informational needs and that reducing uncertainty will remove barriers promoting open exchange of information (Fein, 2006).

However within a traditional policing milieu, this area appears problematic in several ways. First, it appears to be a subcultural product of the paramilitaristic mindset which is very authoritarian (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010). In this vein, police often demand compliance and strict adherence to their directives and lawful orders. Granted, times do exist when this approach is necessary; however, many situations can be resolved by more passive means as promoted in other policing philosophies.

Second, police are very reluctant to disclose personal information for any number of reasons to unknown persons and, as previously identified, many were trained to suppress emotions and remain emotionally detached under all circumstances (Foley & Terrill, 2008). Obviously, these disengaging-type of activities could provide obstacles to rapport and hinder the

elicitation of true, thorough, and accurate information in many venues involving persons ranging from witnesses to potential defendants to simply Good Samaritans.

Communication Competency Theory

This theory deals with selecting the appropriate communication behavior that is both effective and appropriate for a given situation (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005; Littlejohn & Foss, 2007). Historically, Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) conceptualized this theory as comprising of three components that are essential for an effective communicator to possess: (1) recognize the appropriate method of communicating (knowledge); (2) ability to perform in the appropriate communication mode (skill); and (3) desire to effectively and appropriately communicate (motivation).

Although numerous policing illustrations could be presented, probably one of the best examples would be in crisis situations such as hostage-taking (McMains & Mullins, 2001; Taylor, 2002; Taylor & Donald, 2003). Taylor (2002) claims it is essential that crisis negotiators communicate in a way that expresses understanding for the other situation (empathy), demonstrate willingness to accept personal responsibility (apologize), and make continual efforts toward developing interdependence and trust (promise and reassurance). In these situations, it is incumbent upon a negotiator to demonstrate respect and establish trust with the barricaded subject or hostage-taker before transitioning to problem solving. Scholars posit negotiators must establish rapport utilizing behavioral strategies such as empathetic listening, paraphrasing, openness, and reflection (Taylor, 2002; Taylor & Donald, 2003).

In similar fashion, police are very often required to deal with traumatized persons such as victims and victims where the very same skills and attributes are necessary (Foley & Terrill,

2008; Vallano & Compo, 2011). The value and amount of elicited information can be severely hampered if the wrong communication strategy is employed during these often difficult times for others. It is imperative that the frontline officer quickly assess and employ sound communication strategies necessary to acquire and preserve investigative data.

Undoubtedly, this theory is crucial in the elicitation of information from suspects and defendants. The importance of demonstrating proper interviewing skills in this milieu cannot be overstated and a plethora of literature exists. Numerous schools of thought and specialized training exists in this area (Gordon & Fleisher, 2011; Inbau, et al., 2004; Walters, 2003; Zulawski & Wicklander, 2001). Sadly, many researchers have identified this area as extremely deficient for many police agencies provided little to no training and instruction for this process (Linfoot, 2007; Walters, 2003).

Summary

As evidenced by the literature, no single theory can prove dominant when considering the many different forums that police are expected to excel; however, it is clear that the processes associated with interpersonal and communication skills can be extremely complicated and complex requiring additional training and education to master and be continually successful. Scholarship is fraught with examples where policing personnel must possess the skills necessary to engage in effective communication in many different environments (Pynes, 2001). Certainly within such critical context as policing it is readily apparent that highly specialized and appropriate communication abilities and skills are necessary to mitigate such interactions to include potentially deadly situations.

SECTION IV: COMPARISON OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Introduction

In 2007, it was estimated that there are 12,575 local police departments operating United States employing approximately 463,000 full-time sworn personnel (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010). In 2008, 73 federal agencies employed approximately 120,000 full-time law enforcement officers (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012). To fully examine each one of these agencies would be an enormous undertaking far outside the scope of this paper; however, many agencies do ascribe to similar recruiting, hiring and training protocols.

Furthermore, the federal government and virtually all states grant veterans some form of employment preference (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1990). Veterans' preference laws were designed: (1) to reward military veterans for their military service; (2) ease transition from military to civilian life; (3) encourage patriotic service; and (4) attract well-qualified individuals to civil service. Although quite beneficial to the veterans, these veteran employment preferences vary significantly among agencies and organizations.

For purposes of this comparison, generalities pertaining to the federal government will be employed while the Texas Department of Public Safety will be examined separately. Many of the qualifications and requirements remain constant among agencies to include, but not limited to, citizenship, criminal involvement, illicit drug usage, and so forth. These three organizations were selected due to personal knowledge, experience and observations made by the author.

Federal Employment Qualifications and Requirements

A college degree is required by most federal agencies for entry-level positions (Schmalleger, 2009). Among these agencies are the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration, the bureau Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the Secret Service, the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

According to the Federal Jobs Network (2012), qualified applicants for the position a Special Agent with the FBI must be U.S. citizens at least 23 years of age but younger than 37. Applicants must possess a four-year college degree from an accredited college or university or other institution recognized by the United States Secretary of Education. They must have at least three years professional work experience possess a valid drivers license and the of available for assignment anywhere in the world. To be employable by the FBI, applicants must be a U.S. citizen having successfully completed a medical evaluation, polygraph examination, and an extensive background investigation.

Since many of these requirements are imposed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), all other federal agencies use these basic qualifications, however may obtain special dispensation due to unique jurisdictional concerns of the agency. These agencies may impose more restrictive guidelines; however, they cannot be more lenient. In addition, many agencies require applicants to satisfactorily complete civil service examinations, panel interviews, and drug screenings.

FBI New Agent Training

Training for new FBI agents is conducted in Quantico, Virginia at the FBI Academy. This new agent training totals approximately 640 hours over 17 weeks (Fein, 2006). Approximately 69 hours is dedicated to the elicitation of information through interviewing and interrogation methods contained within 15 classes. Two practical exercises are interwoven into approximately 27 hours is dedicated to interrogation tactics.

The FBI acknowledges that rapport is a key motivating factor promoting conversation in both interview and interrogation forums (Neuman & Salinas-Serrano, 2005). This position is central to the direct accusation approach in that the interviewer must not only establish rapport, but must maintain it throughout the exchange. FBI instructors readily admit that the most difficult skill to instruct and learn to a standard training program is establishing and maintaining rapport. Indisputably, building rapport takes time and dedication and that many of the interpersonal skills may be innate and highly dependent on an individual's abilities and personalities. The FBI recognizes that effective interrogators must possess strong communication, listening, and interpersonal skills, and approach these tasks with patience, and alert attentiveness as well as awareness of intrinsic and extrinsic case facts.

Similarly to other federal instructors, FBI instructors admit that it is unclear as to how well this training and its techniques are applied. It has been estimated that only 25 to 30% of those trained in the FBI's interviewing and interrogation method actually employ these techniques once in the field (Neuman & Salinas-Serrano, 2005). In this regard, many other law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, lack data to examine the efficacy of their training in interview and interrogation techniques. All interested parties acknowledge this serious shortcoming and agree that requires further study.

Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Training

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) is responsible for providing training to over 80 different federal agencies (Neuman & Salinas-Serrera, 2005). FLETC provides basic, advanced, and specialized training to provide individuals with no law enforcement experience the tools necessary to become criminal investigators while also addressing more challenging educational needs of the more experienced and career law enforcement professionals.

The principal FLETC training modules for interviewing and interrogation is conducted in the basic Criminal Investigator Training Program (CITP) in six- and 12-hour versions with the ten-hour version being most often selected (Neuman & Salinas-Serrano, 2005). Within the ten-hour format, only two hours are dedicated to confrontational interviewing techniques often associated with suspects. These interviewing programs are supplemented with the lab and practical exercises were participants conduct interviews interrogations with role players. The overall number of exercises varied by agency and can culminate with a four-hour CIPT Confrontational Interview Practical Exercise.

Within this framework, FLETC offers interviewing and interrogation training that closely mirrors the Reid technique and the FBI's method with the goal of eliciting useful, truthful information (Neuman & Salinas-Serrano, 2005). FLETC uses a five-step technique for interviewing and interrogation consisting of: (1) introduction; (2) rapport; (3) questions; (4) review; and (5) closing. Intertwined within these steps are the same tactics and techniques is employed by the FBI and consistent with the Reid technique. Of note, the lab and practical

exercises are agency-specific and typically involve direct instructor observation providing milieu and scenarios germane to actual fieldwork.

It is noteworthy, that many agencies augment this FLETC training during their own agency unique academies. These trainings are agency specific and can vary a great deal. For instance, one major federal agency allocates 24 hours to interviewing with emphasis on building and maintaining rapport.

Texas Department of Public Safety Qualifications and Requirements

Applicants for state trooper position must be at least 20 years of age and there is no maximum age limit (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2012). These applicants must have a minimum of 60 earned college hours from a regionally accredited college or university; however, academic requirements may be waived with prior law enforcement experience or honorable military service. Also, applicants are required to satisfactorily complete written in physical exams, polygraph examinations, background investigations, board selection process, psychological testing, medical valuation, and drug screenings. These requirements seem to typify most other state law enforcement organizations and larger county and municipality agencies.

Basic Academy Training

The basic academy training at the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) is approximately 26 weeks in duration. Personal interviews with recruit coordinators at the DPS academy reflect the curriculum is primarily comprised of traditional aspects of training. Consistent with Chappell (2008), this training includes physical activities such as firearms training, physical training, defensive tactics, and driving skills. The knowledge aspects of

training focused on law, arrest procedures, traffic enforcement, and officer safety. Similarly, it appears interpersonal communications, diversity, problem solving, and other aspects of contemporary policing may give way to traditional policing methods. With inquiry, it was learned that less than four hours may be allocated to the processes of information elicitation at this phase.

Advanced Interview Training

New opportunities to acquire interviewing and interrogation training were available once the trooper was promoted to investigator. These trainings often varied in course content, objectives and delivery and did not appear to emphasize interpersonal communication skills, and stressed more traditional approaches to interrogation. This new agent training is eight weeks in duration and, today, the processes involving human interaction are an add-on curriculum.

In 2008, the DPS gravitated from an adversarial, confrontational interview and interrogation style to a technique with emphasizes on the collection of complete, accurate, and reliable information based in truth to meet investigative needs (Bryant, 2008). This paradigm shift resulted in the development and implementation of a new 40-hour course of instruction originally aimed at newly promoted investigators, but now extended to all investigators .

The five primary steps in the DPS technique for interviewing and interrogation consisting of: (1) introduction; (2) establishing rapport and control; (3) elicitation of information; (4) evaluation; and (5) closing (Bryant, 2008). Incorporated into the structure are two primary practical exercises with the primary focus of this training is interpersonal and communication skills to include rapport building and rapport strategies with emphasis on encouragement and persuasion of the interviewees to cooperate and be truthful within the police inquiry.

SECTION V: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

The role and importance of interpersonal and communication skills within every day policing must be reevaluated and assessed. In spite of its significance and prominence in every facet of the policing profession, interpersonal and communication skills still remain as one of the most unrecognized, or at least minimized, aspects for hiring consideration, performance evaluation and training.

Related empirical, theoretical, and practical findings and observations were examined as associated with the efficacy of interpersonal skills among law enforcement personnel. Also, research, data, and publications from accredited journals, textbooks, and websites of other disciplines were relied upon. Finally, two dominant interpersonal communication theories were incorporated into this examination. The most critical area consideration involving interpersonal and communication skills occur at the level which police have the most interaction with citizens.

Due to this reason, the primary focus of this paper was to examine interpersonal communications among frontline police personnel from stages of recruitment to in-service. Indeed, the importance of interpersonal communication skills and its capacity to promote professionalism cannot be overstated as it is essential to the efficacy of any policing organization entrusted with public safety.

There is little empirical research in many of these areas but there is ample suggestive evidence to support the notion that some shortcomings within policing can be attributed to inadequate or insufficient communication or interpersonal skills that appear intrinsic to traditional policing philosophies. Departure from the traditional mindset is obvious and necessary along with appropriate training. Unquestionably, modern day policing filled with traditional practices characteristic of paramilitaristic style and subculture universally shared

among many agencies must give way to more progressive and innovative methods characterized as positive, accommodating, empathetic, engaging, cooperative, and helpful as mandated by society and its citizenry (Holmberg, 2004).

Historically, criminal justice administrators have negated and ignored the importance of this area for any number of reasons often opting to focus on the more traditional aspects of law enforcement (Chappell, 2008; McDermott & Hulse, 2012). Aside from just local jurisdictional implications, this mindset has the potential to allow greater threats to public safety to go undetected and occur on American soil (Fein, 2006; Kelling & Bratton, 2006).

Some administrators fail to transition from traditional paramilitaristic policing methods to more contemporary policing philosophies for any number of reasons creating confusion as to mission, priorities, and objectives of their agencies (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Stojkovic, et al., 2008). Today, the traditional roles of frontline police as crime-fighters and crook catchers have been replaced, or at least augmented, with contemporary roles as providers of crucial community and social services, often unrelated to crime (Meadows, 1987). Ellison (2006) argues this transition toward contemporary philosophies of community policing requires personnel to expand their focus on public safety, crime, fear of crime, and community quality of life.

Within this framework, frontline police are expected to be proactive rather than reactive and participate with their communities in shaping police objectives and intervention strategies requiring open dialogue between all parties. This increased communicative interaction between the respective citizenries and local police departments, can create an environment of extreme vigilance at many levels necessary to effective combat crime and counter terrorism (Kelling & Bratton, 2006; Safe Cities Project, 2005).

Effective communication is essential to conflict resolution, crisis negotiations, efficient management and the ability of police to communicate successfully and effectively with the citizenry, yet it is one of the most undertrained aspects within the profession (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Paynich, 2009). Sadly, interpersonal and communication skills as required in contemporary policing have been identified as severely deficit in America's frontline police (Linfoot, 2007, 2008; Walters, 2003).

Some theorists contend many agencies are ingrained in traditional policing philosophies and may simply negate and, perhaps, ignore the importance of interpersonal and communication skills as noted by their absence or minimization in hiring criteria (Henson, et al., 2010; Sanders, 2003, 2008; White, 2008; White & Escobar, 2008). Other theories continue this thought process by arguing academy training is entrenched in traditional philosophies and simply minimize the importance of communicative skills in current training curricula (Walters, 2003; Woods, 2000). Furthermore, pedagogical methods of instructional delivery as found inherent to traditional policing are argued to be counterintuitive to desired objectives and goals of interpersonal skills training (Chappell, 2008).

Migration from a heavy-handed traditional police mindset to one of more understanding, compassionate, and empathetic style inherent of service orientation and community policing philosophy is also well demonstrated. Although some complaints are inevitable, there is strong suggestive evidence that many of them are the result of adequate communication abilities among police; thus, this evolution coupled with appropriate training of various interpersonal communication theories could significantly reduce citizen complaint rates (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010; Schmalleger, 2009; Stojkovic, et al., 2008).

Today's literature readily reflects that employment considerations used during recruitment, selection, and hiring phases are significantly different among agencies, lack uniformity, and seemingly demonstrate less importance once the hiring phase is completed with reversion to the traditional policing mindset. It appears partial blame for this phenomenon rest with administrators who fail to embrace more contemporary policing philosophies and maintain or revert to characteristics and attributes often found in traditional policing subcultures (Ellison, 2006; Shane, 2010; Watson, 2010).

Some researchers argue that evaluation criteria are more geared toward traditional policing activities than contemporary demonstrating creating evaluation difficulties for supervisors (White, 2008; White & Escobar, 2008). In this light, Henson (2010) argues many of the problem solving and conflict resolution measures involving communication skills are nearly impossible to objectively evaluate and are often dismissed by evaluators. These evaluation difficulties cause frontline police to vacate community policing activities opting to satisfy traditional performance and evaluation criteria (Henson, et al., 2010; Sanders, 2003; White & Escobar, 2008).

Significant scholarship exists arguing today's recruiting, selection, and hiring practices within many criminal justice organizations have fail to adequately identify those individuals possessing adequate interpersonal and communication skills (Decicco, 2000; Means & Lowry, 2011; Means, et al., 2011a, 2011b; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010). Other theorists may argue simply requiring higher education among applicants could benefit in addressing this deficit (Dominey & Hill, 2010; Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010; Paynich, 2009; Schmalleger, 2009).

An overabundance of literature exists supporting the need for higher education and its contribution to professionalism within the policing profession. Bruns (2010) best encapsulates

the benefits of a college degree by arguing those individuals have better oral and written communication skills; exhibit greater professionalism and tolerance for others; exhibit enhanced understanding of human behavior; are more autonomous and well-rounded thinkers with higher problem-solving skills; exercise greater ethical conduct; demonstrate levels of authoritarianism; reflect greater intellectual development; exude increased self-confidence, morale and motivation; received fewer citizen complaints; require fewer disciplinary measures; and overall exhibit better public relation skills than their non-college-educated counterparts. Unfortunately, less than 1% of U.S. Police agencies have this requirement for applicants (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010).

In reviewing the different agency models, it is clear there is greater emphasis being placed on communication and interpersonal skills within their respective training milieus (Bryant, 2008; Neuman & Salinas-Serrano, 2005). As demonstrated to date, perhaps the FBI leads in this area by allocating approximately ten percent of their academy training for new agents to communicative skills development. The Texas DPS also appears to give substantial consideration to this area which reflects 40 hours out of a total of 360 hours of training for new investigators is dedicated to developing communication skills. Other agencies demonstrated less importance and significance for training in this area; however, additional research and evaluation is warranted.

While hiring practices and training aspects are notably varied among law enforcement agencies and rather vague concerning communicative attributes, it is reasonable to conclude that the college requirements certainly benefit agencies at many different levels. Moreover, higher education was found to yield better communicative abilities which demonstrated positive correlation to greater professionalism as demand by society in today's police.

This treatise clearly demonstrates greater consideration for interpersonal and communication skills is warranted in today's policing and should not be minimized or dismissed. Agencies should strive to only hire the best qualified individuals possessing the qualities, characteristics, and traits commensurate with contemporary organizational philosophies giving due consideration for the more educated applicant. The benefits of having a workforce that is well-educated and highly versed and competent and interpersonal and communication skills are vast, compelling, and enumerated.

Once hired these individuals should receive adequate, proper and appropriate training delivered in a manner conducive to community policing outcomes. Additional focus and emphasis should be placed on interpersonal and communication skills necessary to properly, efficiently, and effectively function within any policing environment with understanding of various interpersonal communication theories. Objective performance and evaluation methods should be developed and implemented to assess accurately these skills and progression during training and subsequent deployment in the field.

It has been recognized and generally accepted that these types of skills are perishable if not often utilized and employed in meaningful fashion. As a result, periodically trainings consisting of refreshers and enhancement developments should be instituted so as to prevent diminishment.

While the strategies and recommendations outlined in this paper are not all inclusive for improving the interpersonal and communication skills of frontline police, these recommendations and suggestions would assuredly provide benefit. Granted, certain limitations and hindrances do exist that may preclude recommendations herein made; however, the research

is clear. Little argument exists about the importance of these human skills involving communication and their overall role and importance to policing effectiveness at all levels.

In sum, contemporary policing requires more community- and problem-oriented abilities. Today's frontline police must possess skills consistent with fulfilling any number of civil servant roles (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010). To be effective and successful, frontline police must possess attributes consistent with independent functioning while exhibiting "competencies such as leadership, initiative, and imagination that have traditionally been associated with higher-ranking officers" (Ortmeier & Meese III, p. 224). The emergence of new policing philosophies requires police to master a vast array of technical, cognitive, and affective skills while excelling in communication and interpersonal skills often possessed by the higher educated (Breci, 1994; Carter & Wilson, 2006; McFall, 2006).

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